



Virginia Intercommunity Transition Council
A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

VITC

Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

Youth and Family Empowerment

All individuals go through transitions as they grow and mature. Transition is a natural part of life. Transition efforts are most effective when youth and families are empowered to be equal partners in the planning process. Equal partners have and share unique knowledge and experience. The youth and family's desired outcomes are the primary focus throughout the transition process. Being inclusive and proactive are critical to ensure the greatest opportunities for a smooth transition.

It is essential to create communities that promote youth and family empowerment based upon person-centered principles. Transition efforts are most effective when individuals are empowered to make decisions about their lives, assume personal responsibility, and experience choice and control in their lives.

Promote youth and family empowerment.

- Youth and families must actively participate and take leadership roles in the planning process.
 - Learn how to participate in and lead their transition meetings.
 - Respect transition team member values and opinions.
 - Understand the laws guiding transition.
 - Include people at the table who can assist in the transition process.
 - Recognize and respect the youth's abilities, interests and preferences.
 - Ensure youth and families are heard.
 - Share responsibility in transition planning.
- Encourage youth and families to be open to new experiences.
 - Connect to a variety of formal and informal community resources.
 - Set high expectations.
- Support youth and families to access leadership training opportunities.
 - Encourage students to take a lead in making transition decisions.
 - Work together to achieve identified goals.



For more information contact your local school principal, special education director, local field office for the Department of Rehabilitative Services, the Virginia Department of Education; the Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (www.peatc.org), the Center for Family Involvement (www.centerforfamilyinvolvement.org), the Center for Self-Advocacy Leadership (www.virginiaseelfadvocacy.org), The Arc of Virginia (www.thearcofva.org), The Virginia Association of Centers for Independent living (vacil.org) and/or the I'm Determined project (www.imdetermined.org).

Take the steps to person-centered thinking
ASK, LISTEN, RESPECT, COMMIT!

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